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PROCEEDINGS OF THE SOUTHERN ASSOCIATION OF COLLEGES AND PREPARATORY SCHOOLS

SOME PROBLEMS OF THE ELECTIVE SYSTEM

C. H. THURBER

Few educational questions have been more widely discussed in the last ten years than the general subject of electives. If there is any remote domain of this territory left unexplored, I certainly am not optimistic enough to believe that I shall discover and explore it in this paper. The whole question is one of great intricacy, having many ramifications and reaching out in its ultimate bearings to nearly every phase of educational activity. Rather than attempt a superficial, bird's-eye view of the whole territory, I shall attempt to confine myself to the discussion of certain definite, important, and well-recognized high-school problems and the bearing which the elective system may have upon their solution.

The first problem to which attention may be called is the problem of differentiation. By that is meant the sifting or selective function which the school performs. This is a modern problem. When only a few were educated at all, and those few selected before their education began for a special place in society, that is to say, when there was a specific educated class, and a small class at that, there was no sifting to be done. The material presented to the school might, indeed, be quite various, but the function of the school was to make out of it, by some mysterious process of transmutation, one uniform product. Now, however, education, and even higher education, has become universal, in the sense that it is universally accessible, and the functions performed in the community by educated men and women are numerous and most varied. A whole universe of new intellectual activities in science, mechanics, commerce, even literature and art, has been thrown open to stir ambition, rouse aspiration, and entice to its conquest. An absolutely uniform product is no longer demanded or expected from the higher schools of any country. The problem in every civilized country that has seriously set itself to the task of educating its people is how best to differentiate somewhere in the school course the

different classes of students who are ultimately to take quite different positions in the active world.

The different grades of the school organization have been curiously self-denying in their attitude toward this problem. The college has been of the opinion that the process of differentiation should be postponed to the university career or that it should be performed in the secondary school. The university has been quite clear that it should be accomplished somewhere before the university grade. The secondary school is inclined to the opinion that this honor and responsibility might better be referred to the grammar and elementary grades in order that their humdrum routine might be enlivened and vivified by the addition of this high duty. The whole situation reminds one of the caricature of a band of public plunderers in one of the comic weeklies. The question under the caricature is—Who stole it?—and the distinguished group of bandits standing in a circle is each one pointing to his neighbor. To the question, who shall bear the responsibility of this differentiation or sifting process, the various units of the school organization point each solemnly to some one of the other units.

But after all that is only a passing phase. The schools cannot shirk, nor do they wish to shirk this responsibility permanently; and after careful study and due deliberation the matter is settling down pretty well to the belief that the real place where this function is to be exercised must be in the secondary school. The period when individuality develops is the period of adolescence; then it is that manhood dawns in the boy, womanhood in the girl; then it is that those ideals are born and those visions seen which give direction to all after life and color all mature activities. It is true that at the present time the secondary school period does not correspond exactly to the period of adolescence but the most fruitful years of adolescence, the most significant years, the most hopeful years, the most determining years, do lie within the secondary school period. Here then this great new function of education is to be exercised.

But how? Various answers have been given to this question. In Germany, as we know, the secondary schools are of totally different types, taking the child at the age of nine or ten, much below our high-school period, and carrying him through an education which shall fit him for either the learned professions or the technical professions or a little of both as in the real gymnasium; but after the age of entrance there is practically no possibility of switching over from one track to the other. The differentiation is made, then, not in the school but

before the child enters the school. The function of the school is simply to fix upon the individual a certain stamp and to guide him to a fixed goal, and the stamp and the goal are perfectly well known before the child is placed in the school. In other words, neither the child nor the teacher nor the school acts in this sifting process. The determining factor is the parent who decides when the child is at an early age and has had no opportunity to disclose his capacities just what career he is to follow. What determines the parent is largely social ambition and the financial ability to gratify that ambition; the nature and capacity of the child is not in the least regarded. It is a purely objective system of secondary education.

In France, the differentiation has been postponed somewhat later in the school course. In the last twenty years endless experiments have been made there in the direction of a more adequate differentiation of secondary school curriculums. And in so far as the differentiation has been postponed to a later date, that country has evolved a better system than prevails in Germany. But here again it does not appear that the differentiation is based upon any real study of the aptitudes of the child. Here again it takes place rather too early for the individuality of the child to develop. And, after all, the differentiation does not amount to very much. Moreover, the modern courses, as they are called, are carried on in the same buildings with the classical courses, and owing to the long and undisputed sway of classical authority in French education, everything that is not classical is distinctly bourgeois, plebeian, a social outcast, an educational pariah. Indeed, neither Germany nor France shows us the best foreign attempts made at the solution of this great problem. We should probably have to admit that the Scandinavian countries, particularly Sweden, have taken by far the most advanced and reasonable position on this matter.

But what is the bearing of the elective system upon this problem? No other country, I think, has gone so far in developing the elective system in higher education as our own. By higher education I mean here what we would speak of as high school and collegiate education. The elective system is so completely recognized everywhere in university work that we can leave that out of the question. The elective system in its essence means the adaptation of the studies to the individual. It does not mean the choice of the individual between two or three or four definitely prescribed groups of studies which we call curriculums. That sort of thing is the compromise between the old and the new, representing a doubtless necessary and inevitable

transition stage, but nothing more. The ideal curriculum is the individual curriculum; and there is no limit, except that set by the mathematical law of permutation and combination, to the number of individual curriculums that may be developed in a school. There is no necessary limit, either, to the number of different studies that may have admission to the curriculum except the number of possible human interests and the financial ability of the school. The selective process here becomes *a self-directed process of selection on the part of the pupil*. The selection is subjective, not objective. The choice is not imposed from without by parent or state or church or teacher, but compelled from within by the natural inclinations and capacities of the pupil. The students sort themselves. This does not mean a condition of chaos and anarchy: it does not mean yielding to whim and caprice: it does not mean a *laissez faire* policy on the part of principal and pupil. What it does mean in all these respects will be touched upon in the further discussion.

The next great problem is that which is perhaps most generally treated under the head of mental discipline, or the dogma of formal discipline, or something or other of that kind. This differs from the problem of differentiation in that, while differentiation is new, mental discipline is very old — hoary with age; indeed, one might almost say, in a senile second childhood. Yet it has had a long and respectable career, still exercises wide dominion, and is a factor to be reckoned with. There are many phases to this problem. Its importance is emphasized in many ways. It is said that the mind must be exercised by intellectual gymnastics just as the body is by physical gymnastics; that the different faculties of the mind — memory, will, emotion, and what not — must receive each its appropriate training, and that one subject is good for training one faculty, another for training another, and another for training them all. Of all these statements the last is the most unimpeachable, for there is a good deal of doubt in modern psychology, more than that there is radical unbelief in the old faculty theory. The mind is *one thing*, manifesting itself in different modes of activity. Then whatever feeds the mind tends to strengthen all forms of its activity.

But not to go too far into the land of psychological theory, which, some hold, is foreign soil for a teacher, it may be agreed on all hands that an acceptance of any theory of formal discipline carries with it some theory of educational values. That is to say, if we are to train either special faculties of the mind or special activities of the mind

through special subjects, we must know, or *guess that we know*, what the special value of each subject in the program of studies may be. A good deal of writing, and some little thinking, have gone to the elucidation of this vexed problem of educational values. And still the wonder grows! It may be fairly doubted whether there are any two people living who have thought seriously upon this subject and have formed opinions of their own, who would fully agree upon the educational values of the different subjects constituting the program. How shall we base any system of education, how shall we found any important function of education upon such a basis of shifting sand? Moreover, any discussion of educational values inevitably carries with it some theory of the superiority of one or more subjects over others. Most of us would probably be inclined to think that the particular group of studies which we ourselves have pursued, constituted on the whole the superior group, and that the one study to which we had devoted most time was the aristocrat of the whole settlement. But here again there is bound to be disagreement, and the disagreement is likely to wax warm, and occasionally even hot. Is it necessary, as has often been assumed, to require, as the foundation of our educational system, the determination of educational values upon some generally accepted scale, the establishment of an hierarchy of subjects? The atmosphere of here and now is not favorable to the growth of any new monarchies of any kind. The mind has risen in rebellion and crushed the tyrant of authority in every other field sooner than in the field of higher education. There, too, a free democracy must prevail, and each subject be studied because of its own intrinsic worth to the individual, because the one who studies it finds in it interest, beauty, stimulus, and power.

But there is another phase to this problem of formal discipline which is roughly illustrated by the classic case of the great man who forces himself regularly to do every day something that he does not want to do, for the sake of the moral discipline. It is a good thing, it is said, for boys and girls of high school age, who are inclined to rebel against authority anyhow, to be compelled to study and to learn some things which they do not like, to learn that they have to submit themselves to the eternal order of things in the universe. It seems a trifle ambitious—does it not?—to assume that the order of the universe is fully and accurately reflected in any given school curriculum. Those who know most about the construction of school curriculums, however, might doubtless agree that they must be ascribed

to blind chance or an overruling Providence, for certainly the *nous* or ordering reason does not seem always to have been around when they were made. At any rate, we are brought to the question, shall we force the children to do certain things because we think it is good discipline for them, or shall they do things because of interest?

What is interest? To many a man who has a note out, interest is usury, and to many an educator interest is something equally illegal, abominable, and altogether accursed. To do a thing because we are interested in it is to many minds a sign of weakness, effeminacy, namby-pambyism, lackadaisicalism; it denotes a general weakening of the whole intellectual and moral fiber. To some it represents the conflict between love and duty, but that is not a fair comparison, because duty, as well as love, often involves an element of interest.

Interest may be of the simplest kind, immediate, or it may be mediated through a chain of factors; but it is certain that the grown man or woman never does anything in which he or she is not interested unless under the force of absolute compulsion. Every man does innumerable things almost every day which in themselves he would not do for the pure joy of it. They are a part of the daily grind, of the everlasting treadmill of existence, but they are done cheerfully and zealously because doing them leads to something that is desired, and in which there is a warm and intense interest. The immediate interest is really the weakest of all the interests governing life; and duty may have the highest interest attached to it. It does not necessarily involve the acceptance of any crass theory of hedonism to acknowledge the sway of interest in the affairs of men.

But—and this is the important point in this discussion—we do things either from interest or from compulsion, and from no other reason whatever. We may compel ourselves, it is true, but that is always in obedience to interest. The compulsion that is a real motive in our lives is always external, objective, and frequently if not generally irksome. The whole secondary school system of Germany is dominated by iron compulsion. This does not take the form of physical force; the pupils are not chastised if they do not learn this or that, but they absolutely must go through the prescribed treadmill in order to attain certain very much desired prizes at the end, prizes whose value cannot be rightly expressed in American terms. There is one way to travel, and only one, to reach the goal they must reach. In a monarchical country there may be some justification for the consistent, uniform employment of compulsion as a method of education; in

a republic, however, is it better to accustom the youth to act in all capacities from a high interest or from compulsion? To ask the question is to answer it. Then we must bear in mind, too, that compulsion is fortunately impossible in this country. If the high-school or college course is not made such that it appeals to the young people, they simply do not go to the high school or college; they go to a private school, to a trade school, or go to work.

We hear a good deal nowadays about education for citizenship in our schools. Which process is calculated to make better citizens, the process of free election in which pupils are trained to exercise their judgment in choosing according to enlightened interest, or the process of compulsion by which they are driven to pasture like a flock of sheep and kept within bounds by fences that constantly need repair? The excesses of the German youth who leave their secondary schools and go to the university, in the first year or two of university life, are notorious the world over, and many people believe they are simply the reaction against the code of compulsion of the secondary school period. Under these excesses, many of them die, a good many of them leave the universities, and those who survive, as Bismarck says, rule the nation; but it is a horribly rude process of the survival of the fittest. Better far—is it not?—especially in our republican land, with our democratic institutions, that the ability for self-direction according to high and educated and wisely directed interest should be systematically cultivated, so that on leaving the secondary school period the boys and girls, the products of those schools and that training, shall be fitted to exercise the freedom of choice which then comes to them inevitably, whether in life or in higher education, and thus shall not take a plunge to destruction in the life-giving waters of freedom. If the matter is put upon ethical grounds, the case is still clearer. There is nothing moral about compulsion, and to do a thing because one has to certainly cultivates no moral quality, except possibly that of blind obedience, and this is as often likely to be the obedience of a prisoner in his cell as any other kind. There is nothing moral about submitting to overwhelming force; it may be common sense to do so, but such submission develops no high moral qualities.

The problem of the conservation of the individual next demands attention. We hear it said, on the one hand, that this is an age of excessive individualism; and, on the other hand, and more frequently, that democracy tends to bring all things, all men, all institutions to a dead level of equality. The old notion of Helvetius that all men are

equal at birth and simply different through environment is pretty well abandoned in our thought. To make a genius, according to him, all you had to do was to take any average individual and put him artificially in the conditions in which genius is developed. Granting all that can be urged for environment, we still believe that there are individual differences imparted by nature, that Rousseau had a good deal to recommend his view. The modern ideal is, or should be, to preserve the individual in society; to get, that is, the best out of the individual as an individual and also in his social relations. The excessive development of individualism may become obnoxious in special cases, and such obnoxious idiosyncrasy education ought to inhibit wherever possible. But if we are to avoid a dead level of uniformity, certainly we are not to aim in our schools at the manufacture of one uniform product, each made in the image of its maker and stamped with all the trademarks of pedagogical machinery.

There is no aristocracy of birth in this country, and educational privileges are open more fully to all than any where else in the world. To the schools then come all classes and conditions of boys and girls with all degrees of mental and physical and moral power, and all potentialities for development in innumerable lines. All are not intellectually equal. In order to meet the requirements of each individual, there should be not only election of studies but also election as to the number of studies. There is no reason in the nature of things why a strong student, strong physically as well as intellectually, should not carry five or six studies, nor why a student of moderate ability should not carry two or three studies. The school should be a *school*, a place to study under guidance and with the best facilities; not merely a thing to get through and to be graduated from in a definite, limited time under penalty of dire disgrace. The preservation of the individual in the high school is one of the most important problems; for, as has already been said, it is here that the ideals are born which shape the future life. The success or failure of life is generally determined in the high school period; and it is a slaughter of the innocents to repress the development of individuality at this critical time.

But there is another problem upon which we must touch, and that is the problem of the conservation of the teacher. We might say that the teacher was abundantly able to look out for himself or herself, but we know that there is nothing more deadening than the teacher's life when reduced to mere mechanical routine. The late illustrious English writer on education, Mr. R. H. Quick, has some pathetic passages

in his diary on this subject. A man of high ideals, quick sympathies, and wide grasp of educational problems, he was absolutely discouraged and broken-hearted by the petty routine of drudgery and slavery to which he was subjected as a master at Harrow. He was fortunately not obliged to stay there, having independent means, and having convinced himself that the teacher's life there was quite exactly the opposite of all that he thought a teacher's life should be, he left, bearing away with him, however, a feeling of disappointment which accompanied him through life. As opposed to the deadening influence of mechanical school routine, nothing is more fascinating than the study of the adolescent mind. This period is the most splendid and the most glorious in the whole life of the individual. To come into close and sympathetic contact with this expanding life, to direct its activities and its emotions into hopeful and fruitful channels, is one of the most attractive possibilities that can be offered to anyone. All true teachers have no doubt always felt this. But the possibilities of the teacher for this individual action and reaction are infinitely widened by the elective system. Such study, such personal contact, become a necessity under the elective system, which opens the way, too, for the exercise of the richest elements in the teacher's own soul. To become, in the highest sense, leaders, counselors, and friends is inestimably more inspiring for teachers than the weary round and round of treadmill routine in which they must struggle to preserve themselves above the level of mere taskmasters and slave drivers.

The elective system gives full scope for professional insight, professional tact, the highest degree of professional preparation, stimulus to wide reading of professional literature, encourages the profoundest study of all the problems connected with individual development, opens vistas of professional usefulness and intellectual and moral helpfulness to the teacher which call out the best powers in the teacher's nature. It has often been said that the old-fashioned ungraded school was the best school in the world. It is equally true that it was the worst school in the world. The old-fashioned ungraded school gave to a teacher of strong personality and high ideals an opportunity to impress that personality and develop those ideals in the pupils in a way that often resulted in the lasting admiration and gratitude of the pupils and the wonder of the beholder who saw so much accomplished with such feeble means. The tendency of our stupendous organization of education at the present time is to leave very little room for the personality of the teacher. Great is the loss when any organization is

permitted to crush out those elements which made the old ungraded school with a great soul at the head of it such a potent force. To preserve a place for the play of the teacher's individuality, for the development and activity of the teacher's highest qualities, is as important a problem as any other in school work, and no one factor contributes more strongly to the solution of that problem than the introduction of the elective system.

Another problem closely connected with that of the teacher is the problem of the high school principal. The higher grades of schools have increased enormously in attendance in the last twenty-five years in this country. We are told time and time again that the old type of college president has passed away. It is certainly true that in an institution of from 600 to 6000 students the president cannot stand in those individual relations to his students, cannot be the guide, counselor, and friend, cannot stamp himself upon the institution as was the case in the small college of from 100 to 200 students. Is not the case much the same in the high schools? Much the same, not precisely the same, because the functions of the college president outside his relations to the students are very different from those of the high school principal. The high school principal does not have to look after the finances of the school, secure money for endowments, and do the thousand and one public services which the college president is called upon to render. The college president has been in the past a teacher, sometimes discharging the full duties of a professorship. Now this is less and less true. Many presidents do not teach at all. This function of the president the principal has shared. He has been a teacher in the small school of 50 or 100 pupils, or even 200; the necessary administrative work, when there was a fixed curriculum through which all students had to go, was very slight, and a half an hour or an hour a day on the average saw it disposed of. But when the high school numbers 500, 1000 or 2000 members, with a corps of teachers as large as that of most college faculties, the duties of the principal become quite different. The question arises, then, whether he shall be a machinist or an artist; whether he shall devote himself to making out programs or to building up lives. Shall he become an expert in organization and administration, or an expert in the adaptation of the best pedagogical means to each individual case, a sort of physician to the mind?

The elective system undoubtedly makes very large demands, for its proper administration, upon the devotion, the zeal, the knowledge,

and the sympathy of a principal. It calls for an immense amount of personal consultation with students, teachers, and parents, and offers opportunities for personal contact with students which are presented in no other way. The student may easily be led to feel in these interviews, in which his future course is considered from the highest and most unselfish point of view by the principal, that in him he has a wise, just, and unselfish friend who understands and appreciates his difficulties and perplexities, his capacities and his weaknesses, and does not demand unreasonable things, nor discourage from legitimate aspirations. All this means, however, very large drafts upon the principal's time and nerve power. I feel like emphasizing this point somewhat, for I do not believe that it has as yet been fully recognized that the best results from the elective system demand exceptional care and labor on the part of the principal; and that in order that he may administer an elective system wisely and well he must be relieved, so far as possible, of mere matters of clerical detail, and also, to a large extent, if not entirely, of the necessity of class-room instruction. Unless this is done some part of the work is likely to suffer, and generally it will be the personal consultation and personal oversight; for other things must be attended to or there is an immediate tangle, while this can be omitted with only the result of an unvoiced and often subconscious feeling on the part of a student that something is wrong, that the world is out of joint, he does not know how or where. The elective system widens the opportunity of the principal just as it does that of the teacher, but it also increases his labors, if rightly administered; and until an enlightened public sentiment, expressed through action of the governing boards of schools, fully recognizes the principal's opportunities under the elective system as that of a pedagogical expert and educational counselor the richest fruits of the elective system in the high school will not be gathered.

But the elective system may be all that is claimed and hoped for it in the preceding discussion, yet, unless it adjusts itself to the college entrance needs, it will be to many but as sounding brass and a tinkling cymbal.

But there are really only two fundamental questions involved in this matter of adjusting electives in the high school to college entrance requirements—first an elastic system of requirements on the part of the college, and, second, the provision that no work previously done in the high schools need be repeated in college. Both of these conditions have been already met by colleges to a considerable degree. Those

colleges which have the greatest influence upon determining entrance requirements are most elastic in their scheme of entrance requirements. They seem to be continually striving to make these requirements more elastic. The Committee on College Entrance Requirements in its recent report takes the ground that every study taught in a high school should be accepted for entrance to college, and then proceeds to stipulate that the subject must be taught a sufficient length of time and by sufficiently good methods so as to make it thoroughly worthy of such acceptance, the chief emphasis of the report throughout being upon the proper teaching of the individual subjects so as to make them of practically interchangeable value for college entrance purposes. The standard, then, is to be both quantitative and qualitative, but not specific in subject.

This throws upon the colleges the necessity for providing proper continuation courses. It unquestionably simplified matters vastly to have a single course in the preparatory schools and a single course in the colleges, with a single set of entrance requirements. The small college will sometimes find it difficult to provide proper continuation courses where there is considerable option given in entrance requirements. It sometimes happens that a student having taken a subject in a preparatory school well enough to have it accepted for admission finds that on entering college he is obliged to repeat that study with students who had never taken it before. This is of all deadening processes perhaps the most deadening. But the more widely the colleges themselves adopt the elective principle the easier does the adjustment become.

There are still remnants of the notion that there are certain subjects that are too sacred to be taught in the high school; that if taught in the high school they must be profanely taught, so that college professors would sometimes prefer that students should never hear about their special field until they reach college, otherwise they are spoiled as scholars. I have heard that argument recently, and still more recently I have also heard that the world and its inhabitants were to be knocked all to smash by some vagrant comet, and that carrying a horse-chestnut in the pocket was a sure cure for malaria. The world did not come to an end on the specified date; the man with the horse-chestnut in his pocket has gone to the hospital with fever and ague; and the sacred studies of the college are being juggled about with the others in the construction of high school programs everywhere. All these medieval superstitions are doomed, and they know it.

What the high school can do for the colleges under the elective system is to send to them first of all students who go to college because they hunger and thirst for more of the good things of which the high school has given them a stimulating taste; who go to college after as prolonged a period as circumstances will justify of that sort of study which initiates them into the thought and achievements of the race; which, in short, "points to brighter worlds and leads the way." It is inconceivable that the colleges of the land will refuse to accept students who have had such a training as a good high school with a good elective system can give because of some difference of opinion between the student and the college faculty as to what the most interesting and profitable and delightful subjects are for a youth to study in the high school course.

I have attempted to show that there seems to be the best of grounds for believing that nothing else offers so much help in the solution of some of the gravest high school problems as the introduction of the elective system. And it has been introduced and is being extended, and is sure to go on from victory to victory. The chief danger lies in the careless adoption of a loose and unguarded system of election without due thought in schools which are eager for the newest thing out and are bound to have it at any cost. So far from the elective system being an easy system for the teacher or the principal, a *laissez faire* system, on the contrary, as I have attempted to show, while offering the widest possibilities and calling for the most splendid exercise of ability, it also throws a greatly increased load of responsibility and thought upon the persons who are charged with the management of the schools. It is of prime importance that whatever is done be done well, and the corollary is even more important that whatever cannot be well done should not be done.

There was a delightful state of affairs in education a hundred years ago. There was nothing but brotherly love anywhere. There was no disagreement, no difference of opinion. There was one course in the academy which prepared for college, and one course in the college; and there was no university at all, with all its botherations. Nobody ever dreamed that things could be different or better. To be educated was to know Latin, Greek, and mathematics, and perhaps guess at some metaphysics. There were no problems of educational organization; there was little money spent for education; there were only a few in the civilized world to whom education appealed as a great vital interest. The only place in which any educational speculation was rife

a hundred years ago was in the midst of the turmoil of the French Revolution. The eighteenth century closed in what might be called an educational era of good feeling, a reign of peace. But as we stand in the closing years of the nineteenth century, what subject gives rise to more discussion, shows more difference of opinion, and greater variety of professional judgment, even, than the subject of education? Its scope has been vastly widened with the century. It reaches farther back and farther forward, and comprises an infinitely larger area of the present than it did a century ago. It has become the interest upon which the civilized world lavishes more money than upon any other; so that it has assumed great economic importance. It has come to be believed in as the one potent means of national regeneration and of national salvation. If it be so potent as men somewhat thoughtlessly say, if it be one half so vital to the present and the future, then surely no amount of thought, no amount of discussion, no amount of investigation is too great to lavish upon it. Nor can anyone doubt for a moment that the present condition of unrest, of agitation, of uncertainty, but of inquiry, of faith, of endeavor, of enthusiastic hope and great determination to know the best and to do it is far more promising than the peaceful stagnation of a century ago.

THE PROPER LIMITATION OF ELECTIVE WORK IN SCHOOL AND COLLEGE

C. D. SCHMITT

To one brought up under the influence of the old college with its fixed curriculum and indoctrinated with the idea that excellency in Latin, Greek, and mathematics constituted the highest ideal in scholarship, it may be difficult to eliminate the personal equation and to bring himself to a proper consideration of the question involved. The writer realizes the tremendous change that has taken place within the last twenty years in the abolishment of the prescribed courses in many schools and colleges and the offering in their stead a variety of courses from which the candidate may select either the one most pleasing to his fancy or the one best adapted to his actual needs and mental equipment. The pertinent question is whether in escaping the Scylla of no electives we have not been wrecked upon the Charybdis of all electives. We have no desire to restrict the freedom of the individual who is capable of knowing what freedom is and how to use it, nor